

ART & MUSIC

A Big Test for Vintage Photos

BY ELLEN GAMERMAN

PHOTOS AMASSED by the late mutual fund giant Howard Stein are heading for sale at Sotheby's with what the auction house calls the highest presale estimate for any photography collection ever at auction.

Items in the 175-lot sale, estimated to bring \$13 million to \$20 million, range from daguerreotypes to contemporary photos pulled from thousands of images Mr. Stein kept in Manhattan and elsewhere. The sale will benefit a nonprofit he established.

The New York auction, filled with black-and-white works from the 20th century and earlier, will test the power of vintage photography in an art market that often rewards contemporary pieces over older fare. Working in the collection's favor: Major buyers tend to turn up for evening sales from single-owner collections filled with trophies—in this case, pieces by Man Ray, Margaret Bourke-White and more.

The auction set for Dec. 11, followed by a morning sale Dec. 12, will likely flush out collectors outbid for years by Mr. Stein, a former chief executive of Dreyfus Corp. who died in 2011. Mr. Stein, who helped come up with the famous TV ad campaign featuring the company's lion mascot stepping out of the New York City subway, began collecting photography around 1990. One of his first purchases was a 19th-century photo of—what else—a lion. Here are some highlights from the collection.

ALFRED STIEGLITZ'S

1915 photo, 'Out of Window—291—N.Y.,' right, is the auction's top lot, priced to sell for over \$400,000. Christopher Mahoney, head of photographs at Sotheby's in New York, called it a prime example of Mr. Stieglitz's skill, adding that snow is famously difficult to photograph because the negatives are too dark to coax the finer points from the image. But Stieglitz 'was able to pull out this phenomenally detailed picture that somehow manages to be more than just a picture of a tree with snow on it,' Mr. Mahoney said. Top Stieglitz photographs have sold for more than \$1 million.



© Georgia O'Keeffe Museum/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

IRVING PENN'S 1949 posed image, 'Girl (in Bed) on Telephone' (Jean Patchett), below, first appeared in Vogue magazine. The tangled sheets recall the folds of fabric in a Renaissance sculpture and point to a signature of Mr. Penn's work: 'He's a real genius at incorporating what first seems like messiness or chaos into the images—the incredible disarray of the sheets is actually really deliberate,' said Mr. Mahoney. Perhaps still intimidated by the famous perfectionist, people who worked closely with the photographer years ago continue to refer to him as 'Mr. Penn.' The photo is priced to sell for more than \$60,000.



ROBERT FRANK, the Swiss photographer known for his coverage of postwar America turned his lens on a nanny and baby in Charleston, S.C., left. Denise Bethel, Sotheby's chairman of photographs, Americas, said that as a collector, Mr. Stein had a rigorous eye for quality. 'Some people have it, some people don't—he had it,' she said. The 1956 photo was printed around the time it was taken rather than several decades later, adding to its value. Mr. Frank's auction record was set last year at Christie's with the \$663,750 sale of a 1955 photo of a New Orleans trolley, according to Artnet. This piece carries a \$150,000 low estimate.

MARTIN MUNKÁCSI'S work was one of the inspirations for fashion photographer Richard Avedon. At right is Munkácsi's candid 1930 photograph of boys running into the surf in Africa. The Hungarian artist took advantage of the relatively new technology of hand-held cameras when shooting this image, allowing him to move along the beach with his subjects. Munkácsi started as a sports photographer, shooting soccer games in Eastern Europe, and later went on to introduce the idea of motion in fashion photography. The photograph carries a \$150,000 low estimate.



Sotheby's (4)

See more photos of the works up for auction at WSJ.com/Art

College Radio Changes Frequency

BY KARISHMA MEHROTRA

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY'S radio station, WRAS Album 88, is known for helping propel Radiohead and R.E.M. to stardom. It was the first radio station to play Outkast, and The Boomtown Rats wrote the song "I Don't Like Mondays" in its offices. Some students say the radio station is the reason they applied to GSU.

Since June, however, the station has undergone an overhaul: Instead of cutting-edge music, it now airs local- and national-news programs 14 hours a day, including during the peak daytime hours.

The news programs are managed by Georgia Public Broadcasting, an affiliate of PBS and NPR, which paid GSU \$150,000 to take over the frequency for that chunk of the day beginning June 29. GPB will continue to pay the university fees that will cover the station's operating costs.

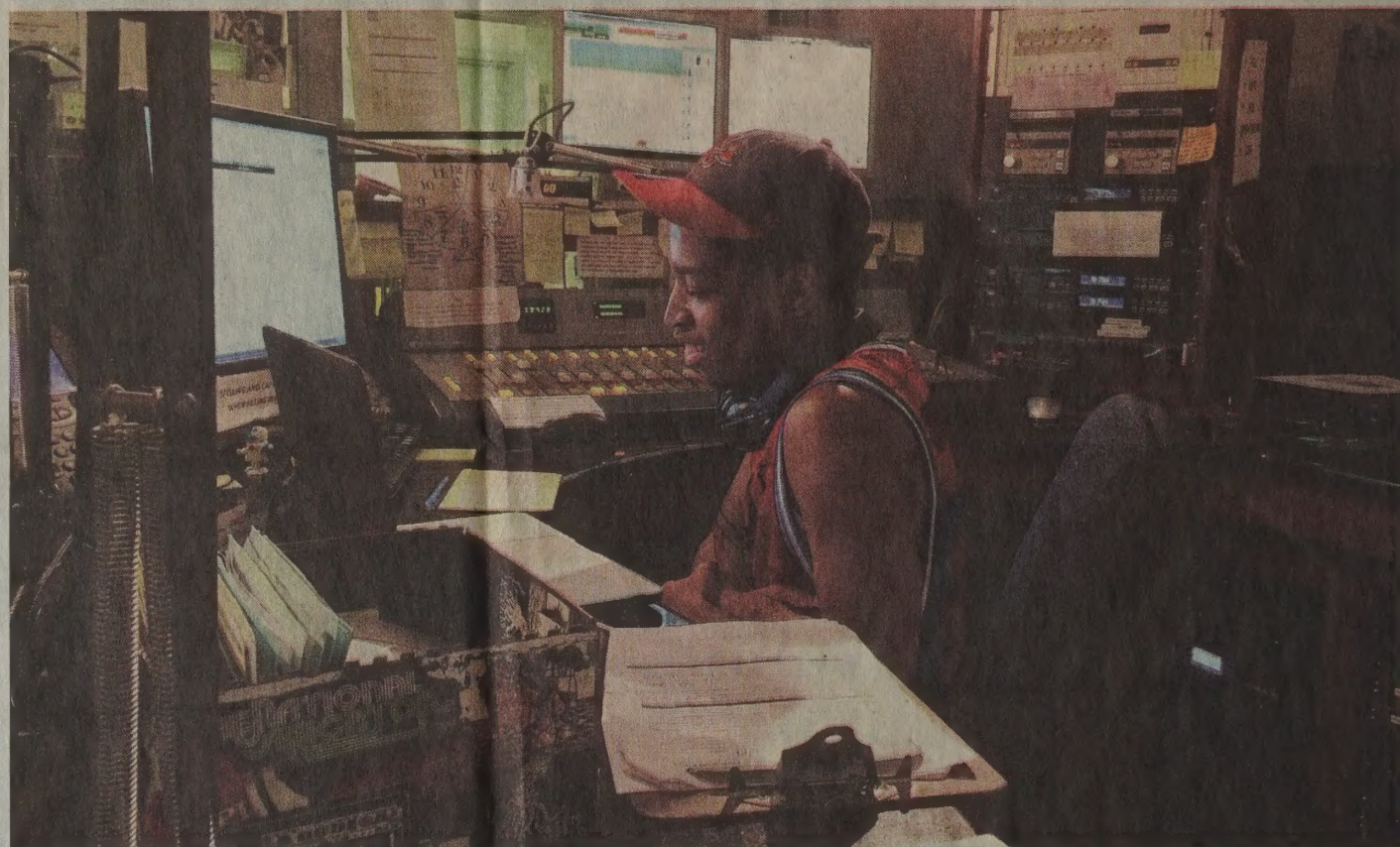
The transition hasn't come without a fight. GSU students, alumni and supporters lit up Twitter to protest the deal. R.E.M., which has a huge social-media following, posted on Facebook and Twitter: "Big Money and power politics closes down a vital student radio station that helped launched [sic] R.E.M. and a host of others ... #saveWRAS."

WRAS isn't the only college station to be transformed. Cash-strapped universities are discovering that their student stations are lucrative assets. They are finding eager partners in public-radio stations and religious broadcasters. The public and religious radio channels are looking to own the equivalent of beach-front property on the FM dial, which has a limited number of frequencies reserved for noncommercial radio. Often, public-radio stations that already host an all-news signal want a second signal to play classical or jazz music to appeal to their target audiences, as music and news generally don't coexist well on one signal.

Those changes mean decidedly different fare for college stations. Rice University's station was known for playing local Houston artists like rapper Fat Tony and indie pop group Wild Moccasins. The University of San Francisco's station used to play the likes of AFI, the Dead Kennedys and MC Hammer as well as cultural programming for Chinese immigrants and the disabled. Both were sold in 2011—USF's license for \$3.75 million and Rice's frequency and tower for \$9.5 million—and now public-radio networks use the frequencies to play classical music all day.

In 2013, Pennsylvania College of Technology sold its station—on which mass-media communications students used to spin blues and jazz music—to the local nonprofit Williamsport Lycoming Broadcast Foundation. More than a dozen other educational institutions have sold their licenses, including Lehigh Carbon Community College and Michigan's Spring Arbor University.

In the music city of Nashville, Vanderbilt University's WRVU 91.1 FM station had long stood out, helping to popularize indie artists like Mum-



Karishma Mehrotra/The Wall Street Journal (top); WireImage/Getty Images (below)



TUNED OUT Before a PBS affiliate took over its frequency, WRAS helped propel groups like R.E.M., left, to stardom. Above, DJ Christian Bowman.

ford and Sons and The Civil Wars.

Four years ago, Vanderbilt's student communications group announced it was selling the station's license to Nashville Public Radio for \$3.35 million. Tune into that frequency now on a Friday afternoon, and you'll hear François Boieldieu's Harp Concerto or Antonio Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Horns.

The sale, which the university's student media group said was made to provide a stable revenue source for its campus media groups, rocked WRVU's loyal fan base. "It went from very eclectic, very powerful music to very close to elevator music," lamented Sharon Scott, a former WRVU general manager and

the founder of Friends and Family of WRVU, an advocacy group that filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission to try to block the sale.

College-radio fans say the deals threaten rock innovation and experimentation. Many fledgling bands still get

their start on college radio, where the lack of profit constraints allows the stations to experiment with music and expand listeners' horizons, they say.

At GSU, the agreement allows the public-radio affiliate to have control over the frequency for 14 hours without acquiring the station's license. WRAS continues to broadcast its own programming online. "The partnership provides Georgia State with valuable new assets, but most important, it opens the door to considerably expanded and enhanced collaboration that will benefit students and the university well into the future," University President Mark Becker wrote in an email.

Many WRAS current and former staffers argue that their popular, professional operation gives them more opportunities for networking and job preparation than the internship opportunities and daily-TV airtime that Georgia Public Broadcasting has given GSU as part of the deal.

"With our oversaturated commercial radio market ... college radio is necessary," said outgoing WRAS general manager and GSU senior Anastasia Zimitravich.

The #saveWRAS campaign has gotten social media shout-outs from many contemporary artists including The Swimming Pool Q's, Girl Talk and Frightened Rabbit. At the end of June, about 50 college-radio stations across the nation aired a one-hour program celebrating WRAS' contributions and history.

On a recent afternoon shortly before GPB took over programming, GSU junior Christian Bowman sat in front of the soundboard equipment and three desktop computers in the dimly lit WRAS DJ studio. He was keeping track of the preprogrammed playlist of songs by White Hex, Haunted Hearts and Musical Garden. "I'm just doing my own thing," he said. "I kinda' like that about it."

THEATER & TELEVISION

Master of Mayhem
Tackles 'King Lear'

John Marcus (above), Matt Orosz for The Wall Street Journal (below)

BY AMY GAMERMAN

DEATH IS EASY, but for a good eye-gouge, Broadway directors call Rick Sordelet.

After a preview performance of "King Lear," at Central Park's Delacorte Theater last week, Mr. Sordelet, a veteran fight director, huddled with Daniel Sullivan, the play's director. The scene in which the Earl of Gloucester is bound to a chair and blinded at the urging of Lear's cruel daughter, Regan, needed more juice.

"We're going to work on the blood," said Mr. Sordelet, a limber 54-year-old. "Dan wants to highlight Gloucester's blood from his eyes, and Regan getting blood on her."

Mr. Sordelet had recently added a piece of staging in which Regan, played by Jessica Hecht, slits the throat of a servant who comes to Gloucester's defense. "She does this," Mr. Sordelet said, lunging at Ryan-James Hatanaka, who plays the servant. "You go, 'Spurt.'"

The spurt wasn't there yet. "He's supposed to spray her with blood," Mr. Sordelet said. "Last night, we flat out missed her."

They only had a few days to get it right. "King Lear" officially opens Tuesday in the Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park festival.

But by the fourth preview performance, the actors had nailed it. "It's so bloody now," exulted Ms. Hecht, a Tony-nominated actress better known for mild-mannered characters such as Walter White's former lover on "Breaking Bad." "They devised this system where I'm completely splattered in blood, like a Jackson



SWORDS' POINTERS Rick Sordelet, far left, and his son Christian Kelly-Sordelet have choreographed the violence for this summer's "King Lear" and other productions.

Pollock painting. Rick will do anything—he'll make it sophisticated and small... or really horrifying. He has this language of physical violence."

A top purveyor of staged mayhem, Mr. Sordelet has created fistfights, sword duels, stabings and gunplay for some 60 Broadway productions—as well as Hollywood films, the Metropolitan Opera, the 1995 Super Bowl half-time show, and "Ben Hur Live," a 2009 swords-and-sandals extravaganza at London's O2 arena. He designs violence that will bring a show to a heightened reality.

"You're looking for that moment—it's al-

clear directive for this "Lear," which stars John Lithgow and runs through Aug. 17.

"Dan said, 'I want brutal. These people are not evil, they're decisive,'" Mr. Sordelet said. "Within that, there's a vocabulary of brutality that I'm interested in."

"Lear" is the sixth play the two men have collaborated on. "I trust what he does," Mr. Sullivan said. "He brings out the thing in you that you had when you were a kid and used to have fake fights with your brother."

Early in the rehearsal process, Mr. Sordelet and his partner, his 26-year-old son, Christian Kelly-Sordelet, held a two-hour workshop for

"anybody who has any violence," which included most of the cast. (Mr. Lithgow and Annette Bening, who plays Goneril, weren't there.)

"We had everybody pick up a sword," said Mr. Sordelet. "They get sweaty, they're pulling hair, they're choking, they're doing all this fun stuff." He wants to make the actors comfortable with the physicality of combat on stage—where every slap, punch and thrust is carefully crafted.

"There are some stunt coordinators who will say, 'Yeah, they're padded up, just really hit them,'" Mr. Sordelet said. "That's a surefire opportunity to see the interior of an emergency room."

He builds contingency plans into his fight choreography. On a film, "a stunt coordinator's job is to go from A to B, and if it doesn't work, you say, 'cut,'" he said. But in the theater, "maybe C, D, E, and F happen on the way to B." Swords and knives can slip from an actor's grasp and bounce offstage. Mr. Sordelet stocks the set with extras. Actors can miss cues for knockout blows; Mr. Sordelet teaches "abort" signals. Because the Delacorte is an open-air theater, he must factor in the possibility of rain and the hazards of fighting on a wet stage.

For the climax of "King Lear" Mr. Sordelet has staged an adrenaline-charged battle between Edmund (Eric Sheffer Stevens), Gloucester's treacherous bastard son, and his avenging half-brother Edgar (Chukwudi Iwuji) that lasts a full two minutes—a marathon in stage-combat terms.

The actors wield five kinds of weapons in nine different combinations—including sword to sword, double sword to sword and shield, shield and sword to ax, spear to ax—culminating in a death struggle with fists and knives. The fight was built from the ground up, like complex dance choreography.

"We start tai chi slow, really, really slow, so it feels natural and the actors can figure it out" before gradually building speed, Mr. Sordelet said. "The battle takes a lot out of them."

Many of his safety measures are concealed in plain sight. Rather than standard prop swords made of heavy, dulled steel, Mr. Sordelet uses lightweight aluminum ones. The sinister-looking leather wrist-wraps worn by the servants-turned-tormentors in the eye-gouging scene are actually protective gear. The actors wear them to prevent sweat from making their hands slippery and possibly losing their grip on Gloucester, played by Clarke Peters of HBO's "The Wire" and "Treme."

"All these young bucks!" Mr. Peters laughed during a rehearsal, as Mr. Sordelet coached the four young actors strapping Gloucester to a wooden chair. Although Regan's husband, the Duke of Cornwall (Glenn Fleshler) does the blinding, the execution of the stunt actually falls to the actors restraining Gloucester.

"The audience isn't going to see it—I don't want them to be aware of it," said Mr. Sordelet. "Cornwall is going to remove Gloucester's eyes. Their duties are part of a magic trick to create this illusion."

For an actor, pulling off that trick can be exhilarating.

"It's liberating—people don't expect middle-aged women to be participating in violent acts," Ms. Hecht said, after her successful throat-slashing. "It's a dimension of a character that is seemingly out of control. But once you execute it well, you feel like you did a flip."

The Mother of All Highland Flings

Outlander

Saturdays at 9 p.m. (with premiere sampling available Aug. 2) on Starz

BY NANCY DEWOLF SMITH



All but the most jaded viewer can probably find something to relish or even gasp at in "Outlander," the historical and romantic drama set in the 18th-century Scottish Highlands, which is about to unfold over 16 episodes on Starz.

There is beauty here, alongside much suffering and injustice, and the story of the woman and man at the center of it all is so strong that it blinds the eye to oddities like time travel. The depiction of daily life among the clans of Scotland fighting to preserve their independence from English encroachment circa 1743 is equally vivid. Starz only sent six episodes to reviewers and it was a jolt to be cut off from more. All that scenery, all those kilts.

On the flip side of love are the knives, the guns, the blood, the whippings, the gorings, flickers of sexual sadism and rough references to bodily functions, in a show where you can smell a lot more than the peat fires.

In the spilling-guts category, it's not "Game of Thrones" or even "Vikings." Pure perversion is largely left to one British officer, Capt. Jack Randall (Tobias Menzies)—who has it in for a particular Highlander and whose predations erupt now and then in ghastly detail. The series' executive producer-writer, Ronald D. Moore, has solid credentials from, among other male-appeal television series, "Star Trek: The Next Generation" and "Battlestar Galactica."

All that said, there's no denying that the ready-made fan base is mostly female so far, and includes all the people who have read the related novels by Diana Gabaldon, of which "Outlander" is the first. The story revolves around Claire Randall (Caitriona Balfe), a combat nurse who has just returned from World War II and been reunited with her husband, Frank, for the first time in years. On a trip to Scotland in 1946, she touches a tall stone at the site of ancient Druidic rituals, hears a roar and comes to lying on the ground. She's still in her white dress, but confused because her car is gone and the woods are now filled with soldiers in red coats firing muskets.

Claire is not safe even after she is rescued by a group of clansmen trying to make their way back to their ancestral castle with one wounded member and with British soldiers all around. She's obviously English, which makes them suspect her as a spy. As a combat nurse with an interest in herbalism, she has medical knowledge, which makes her useful. Early on she sets the dislocated shoulder of a young clansman named Jamie (Sam Heughan)—whose full name no one will tell her—who promises to protect her. But all the men speak Scottish



Sam Heughan and Caitriona Balfe share a horse in "Outlander."

Gaelic among themselves (and on the show much of the time) so she often has no idea what's going on. She struggles to remember the most basic things a stranger of the era would know; for instance, who currently sits on the English throne. Having figured out what has happened to her, she begins plotting to escape and find a way to return to her husband.

Eventually, Claire realizes that she is in Scotland in the 1740s, just before the second Jacobite uprising and the final doomed attempt to put a Catholic Stuart king back on the British throne. And so, "Outlander" invariably also becomes a story about men at war, the ones who fought against the British and the ones who merely sought to preserve their freedom and way of life. A way of life primitive and often brutal—in ways abundantly displayed—but not without an appealing code of honor and courage.

The Highland dress is different from today's, and even more exotic. The kilts, for instance, are larger and "belted." Which means that men like Jamie wear them almost to the ground in the back—to be tucked up while fighting or playing a violent form of field hockey. The skirt can also be pulled up as a shawl on cold nights

or for camouflage. The scenery, outside and in castles and villages, is magnificent. Better yet, there is no sign, no trace, of anything inauthentic for the times. The mountains and glens look pristinely glorious and wild.

Apart from the two leads, and in a large and uniformly fine cast, Graham McTavish stands out as the intimidating Dougal MacKenzie, who initially poses the greatest danger to Claire. Gary Lewis is moving as Dougal's brother Colum, the laird of the clan that Claire—and we know is fated to be shattered.

There are annoying things about "Outlander." For instance, it takes a while to build up satisfying dramatic steam, so it may require more patience than some are willing to give. Claire gets into so many scrapes you find yourself thinking: "What now?"

Then again, and none of us can speak for everyone...but there has to be something great about a show that keeps you staring at it episode after episode, waiting for attraction to take its course, and then begins to pay off with the exchange between Claire and Jamie, when she asks him: "Doesn't it bother you that I'm not a virgin?" and he replies: "No, as long as it does not bother you that I am."

Altman

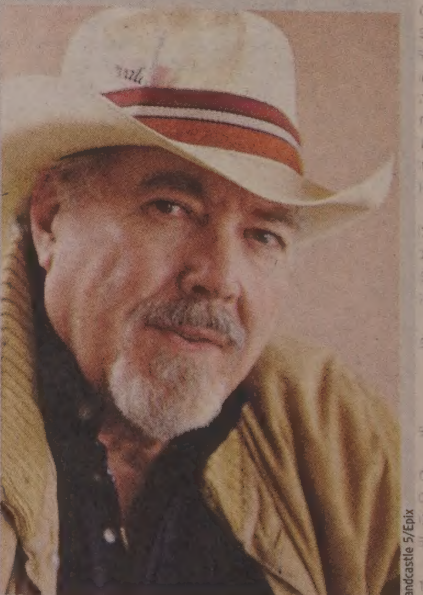
Wednesday at 8 p.m. on EPIX



Fans, nostalgics and other admirers of Robert Altman's oeuvre will want to lap up the two-hour documentary about the late director on EPIX this week, flaws and all. "Altman," made by Ron Mann with the cooperation of Mr. Altman's widow, Kathryn Reed Altman, and other family members, is an affectionate look back at the man whose career began in television in the 1950s and ended with his death in 2006, and a legacy that included more than 40 films. Sad to say, more time is spent on home movies and aspects of Mr. Altman's loathing of Richard Nixon than on any analysis of the artistry, significance or subjects of his films. People who have not seen his movies already (and many never really found an audience, but the ones that did were spectacular) will emerge from this documentary with only the cloudiest notions of the man. He comes across here mainly as a jovial rebel who occasionally blasted Hollywood's obsession with making money and the insistence of financiers on backing movies that a lot of people would want to see—but who also had a deep fondness for actors.

Scenes from some of Mr. Altman's early industrial films and TV shows fly by, followed by snippets from the movies, including the 1970s antiwar black comedy "MASH," which established his reputation and ensured his lasting fame in Hollywood. Stars from his movies, for instance Keith Carradine from "Nashville" and Julianne Moore from "Short Cuts," make brief appearances trying to define the word "Altmanesque." But no one turns up anywhere to talk meaningfully about the substance of his pictures, what they were about, what they meant or how it felt to watch them.

A shame, but it doesn't matter so much. Most of Altman's movies are out there still and they can speak for themselves.



A documentary looks at Robert Altman.